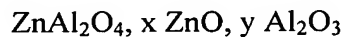




ABSTRACT

The preparation of a crush-resistant transesterification catalyst of the formula:



wherein x and y are in the range of 0 – 2, comprises: stage (a) wherein the amount of zinc oxide necessary to the formation of said catalyst, in which at least a portion of the zinc oxide is replaced by an equivalent amount of at least one of zinc nitrate or carbonate, is mixed with water and nitric acid; stage (b) wherein the resultant mixture is mixed with an alumina gel peptized in the presence of a water/nitric acid mixture, so as to form a paste; stage (c) wherein the resultant paste is extruded; stage (d) wherein the extruded paste is dried in phases, the first at a temperature of less than 100°C, and the second at a temperature of at least 100°C; and a stage (e) wherein the extruded and dried paste is calcined.